

## THE CIVIL SERVICE

## TO BE UNDER FIRE IN THE HOUSE FOR NEXT TWO WEEKS

The Matter to Come Up on Item for Expenses of the Commission in the Executive Appropriation Bill—The Debate Begun—Estimates of Departments \$27,000,000 Greater Than Current Appropriations—Both Houses Adjourn in Respect to Memory of Mrs. McKinley

## SENATE.

Washington, December 14.—The senate was in session just fifteen minutes today, adjournment being taken until tomorrow out of respect to President McKinley who is today in attendance upon the funeral of his mother. The motion to adjourn was made by Senator Hoar. "All senators," said he, "are aware of the great calamity that has overtaken the chief magistrate of the nation. He is today in attendance upon the funeral of his mother. Out of respect to him and as an expression of our sympathy for him in his affliction, I move that the senate do now adjourn."

No business beyond the introduction of bills and resolutions was transacted. Among the bills introduced was one by Senator Klye, of South Dakota, to change the immigration laws of the United States. He gave notice that at the proper time he would offer the bill as a substitute for that which is now pending before the senate.

The only one feature, said Senator Klye, "does my bill differ materially from the measure now before the senate. My bill provides that all immigrants shall have their test of education made by the United States consuls at the points nearest to their homes. It is a serious hardship for these people to cross the ocean with the prospect staring them in the face of failing in the test at the port of a foreign country."

At 2:15 p. m., the senate adjourned.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

The house today after a session of about two hours, adjourned out of sympathy for the president, whose mother was buried at Canton this afternoon. The time of the session was devoted to the consideration of the legislative, executive and judicial appropriation bill.

Mr. Bingham, republican, of Pennsylvania, in charge of the measure, explained its provisions in detail. He said he would offer an amendment to reduce the clerical force in the pension office by 96 clerks, involving a reduction of \$115,000 in salaries. This reduction did not appear in the bill as reported and must be reckoned in the new totals.

Mr. Bingham said that he and his colleagues on the appropriations committee felt satisfied that a reduction of from \$1,000,000 to \$1,500,000 could be made in the salaries of subordinate officers by a process of weeding, without in any way impairing the government service, and, therefore, every suggestion from heads of departments for increase of salaries had been rejected. He called attention to the provision of the bill curtailing the sick leave allowed clerks which had been greatly abused. Investigation had shown that in addition to the regular thirty day leave, 16 per cent. of the clerks obtained each year thirty day sick leaves.

Mr. Bingham did not discuss the appropriations providing for the maintenance of the civil service commission, but stated that the widest latitude would be allowed for debate, even if it should run over the holiday recess. He asked, however, that the provisions of the bill relating to the civil service and the debate thereon should go over until after the consideration of the other features of the bill were concluded.

His request was agreed and an hour and a half was set aside for general debate on the rest of the bill.

Mr. Barrett, republican, of Massachusetts, took the floor and made some general remarks in support of the civil service law in the course of which he referred to the slender minority against the civil service law when it was passed the house in 1883. The vote stood 155 to 47. But three of that minority said, were now members of the house—Messrs. Bland, democrat, of Missouri; McMillan, democrat, of Tennessee; and Stettin, republican, of Indiana. This statement flushed a series of explanations that gave the anti-civil service members repeated opportunities to applaud. First Mr. Steele said he had never had occasion to apologize for that vote. Then Mr. Brumm, republican, of Pennsylvania called attention to the fact that his name as one of those who voted against the measure had been overlooked. He was proud, he said, to be included in the "roll of honor." Mr. Marsh, republican, of Illinois, also claimed a place in the list and added that he had never cast a vote with which he was better satisfied.

Then Messrs. Cannon, republican, of Illinois and Bingham reiterated their opposition to the broad extension of the law by executive orders. The latter explained that the law was passed under suspension of the rules, practically without debate and never contemplated an extension by executive orders that would cover 87,000 government employees. There was much applause and laughter during this series of statements and Mr. Dockery, democrat, of Missouri, suggested that the members of the other side to save time, have leave to file apologies for voting for the law.

Mr. Moody, republican, of Massachusetts, said he was willing to give a hearing on the civil service question and he did so propose to give a judgment in advance.

Mr. Grosvenor commended this statement. He also asked was that the house should honestly consider the question and give its careful judgment.

Mr. Dockery, democrat, of Illinois, discussed the amazing growth of the expenditures of the government during the recent years. The ordinary expenses of the government, exclusive of the public debt in the last eight years exceeded those of the preceding eight years by \$1,000,000,000 in round numbers. In view of this fact there were only two ways, he said, to bring the receipts and expenses together. Either taxation must be increased or the expenses must be curtailed. If the expenses were to be reduced congress alone could not accomplish much without the aid of the executive branch of the government. Despite the president's appeal in his message for economy, the executive branches of the government had submitted to congress estimates for appropriations of \$27,000,000 in excess of the appropriations for the current year.

At this point the committee rose and Mr. Grosvenor, republican, of Ohio, addressing the chair said:

"Mr. Speaker: As is well known, the

funeral exercises of the mother of the chief magistrate of the nation are to take place at this hour and therefore, conforming to the action of the senate and as a token of our sympathy and respect for the president, I move that the house do now adjourn."

The motion was unanimously carried and at 1:45 the house adjourned until tomorrow.

## SWAPPING OFFICES

Superintendent Smith and Agricultural Commissioner Mewbourne Resign—Each to Succeed the Other

(Special to The Messenger.)

Raleigh, N. C., December 14.—Great surprise is expressed here this evening at the news that James M. Mewbourne has resigned as commissioner of agriculture, to take effect December 31st, and that the board of agriculture has accepted his resignation. This was done at a late hour. It is the result of a deal by which he becomes superintendent of the penitentiary, vice John R. Smith, and the latter is elected to succeed him as agricultural commissioner. The reason given for this step is that Mewbourne is considered a far more able manager than Smith. The deal is made by Governor Russell. The penitentiary board will next week elect Mewbourne.

A populist state official was asked tonight to give the true inwardness of the swap of offices by Mewbourne and Smith and said:

"The governor was bent on getting rid of Smith as the penitentiary superintendent and was on the point of having him dropped. He was greatly dissatisfied with his administration and his bad financial management. Smith, I am told, bought far more cotton baling, for instance, than there was any need for and would buy a \$150 horse when a \$75 one would have served the purpose equally as well. Then, as I am told, Smith has fifty more employees than there is any need for. Mewbourne is a good farmer and manager, and will get rid of these surplus people. John R. Smith and his friends are placated by him being made agricultural commissioner. He can hold that place all right. It will be no strain on him."

To Lay Corner Stone of Vance Monument

(Special to The Messenger.)

Raleigh, N. C., December 14.—Grand Master of Masons Walter E. Moore calls the grand lodge to meet at Asheville December 22nd to lay the corner stone of the monument to Zebulon B. Vance, in the court house square.

Supreme court reverses the opinion in case of Smith against Goldsboro.

Delegates to Fishery Congress

(Special to The Messenger.)

Raleigh, N. C., December 14.—The governor appoints as delegates to the national fishery congress, which meets at Tampa, Fla., January 19th, W. R. Capehart, Geo. N. Ives and W. H. Smith.

## THE FORT FISHER SLANDER

General Bragg's Letter Was First Published in the Philadelphia Times in 1880. The Commander of Fisher to Answer it in Next Sunday's Messenger

The republication of General Bragg's slanderous letter reflecting upon the heroes who so gallantly defended Fort Fisher, has naturally stirred up the indignation of the survivors who stood in the breach against the overwhelming odds which Bragg allowed to sweep down upon them. The Messenger Sunday published some communications refuting the statements made by General Bragg, and next Sunday we will publish an article by Colonel William Lamb, who commanded Fort Fisher at its fall, and who is in the best position to refute the slander put upon him and the noble men who successfully held Fort Fisher up to within a few months of the surrender of Lee's army itself.

In response to a letter from the proprietors of The Messenger to Colonel Lamb, he writes us that Bragg's letter was first published in The Philadelphia Times in 1880, and in reply to our letter requesting him to give The Messenger an article on the matter, he writes us that he will send us a reply and says: "It is considered a full vindication of the chivalrous Whiting and my heroic garrison."

In this connection we publish with pleasure the following:

Wilmington, N. C., December 14.

Messrs. Jackson & Bell:

As one of the younger generation, interested in all that concerns the honor of the south and especially North Carolina, I felt like writing something when I read the letter written by General Bragg about Fort Fisher; but I did not, hoping some old veteran, better able to write and more entitled to a hearing, would reply to the manifestly false and grossly unjust statements that so basely reflected upon the brave defenders of the last gateway of the confederacy in their final struggle against overwhelming odds; and now, in the name of young men of our state and city, I wish to thank Mr. James A. Montgomery and the others who have, through your columns, so fully answered General Bragg's disgusting letter. Yours very truly,

W. M. CUMMING.

## The Old North State Forever

Our southern mail brought us the following from a North Carolinian and former Wilmingtonian:

Ocala, Fla., December 11.

Editors Messenger:

Can you supply me with the words to the song "Carolina," or "The Old North State?" We are to have a "possum and 'tater" supper on Friday, December 17th, and want to sing our state song, but can find no copy here and our memories are treacherous. No doubt, you can obtain the words for us there, and if you will send them to me so as to reach us in time for that event we will appreciate it. Yours truly,

W. L. JEWETT.

Secretary N. C. Association.

It is hardly necessary for us to say that The Messenger complied with pleasure with the request made above. The words to our stirring state song were promptly forwarded to her son, who, though absent in Florida, will "cherish, protect and defend her."

## NO MORE FUSION

## DECLARE THE RANK AND FILE OF THE POPULISTS

Members of Massachusetts Prison Reform Association Examining the Penitentiary and the State Farms—Heavy Criminal Docket of the Federal Court—The Grand Jury the Poorest Ever Seen—Fire Insurance Statistics for This State—Immense Profits of the Companies

Messenger Bureau.

Raleigh, N. C., Dec. 14.

A legislative official was asked today the question: "What are the populists talking about?" He is a populist and ought to know. He replied: "Do not use my name and I will tell you. They are saying they don't want any more fusion with the republicans. That is the milk in the cocoanut."

State Librarian Cobb, of the populist committee, was asked why he made so absurd a statement as to say 60,000 populists would vote their tickets if there are no "side issues." He replied: "They will come up whenever needed. We will press the button and they will do the rest. We expect recruits from both the old parties." This is absurd, for there are not at this moment 20,000 populists in the state.

The supreme court will at its next term pass upon the power of the railway commission to regulate the freight rate on cotton. This comes up in the shape of an appeal by the Seaboard Air Line from the recent order reducing rates.

The joint committee of the legislature this morning began the annual examination of the state treasury.

The Baptist convention, which ended its session yesterday, is pronounced the best one ever held in the state, in all respects. Next year it meets at Greensboro.

Joseph F. Scott, H. M. Blackstone and Fred G. Pettigrove, all members of the Massachusetts Prison Reform Association, are here. They inspected the convict camps in Georgia and dislike the system in vogue there. The real power there is the physician at the camp. They visited the penitentiary here and will have a look at the convict farms. They say Massachusetts, owing to the clamor of the people against manufacturing by convict labor is beginning to try outdoor labor in a small way.

There are fifty-five prisoners in the small county jail here, nearly all federal prisoners or persons sent from other counties for safe-keeping. The jail is over crowded, and United States District Attorney Aycock says arrangements ought to be made for keeping the excess of prisoners in the penitentiary.

Before the supreme court this week, the most interesting case is that of Rhine against Roberts, involving the constitutionality of the act of the last legislature, which confers civil jurisdiction upon a judge of the criminal circuit court. In this case the act gives Judge Ewart civil power.

The term of the United States court here ended yesterday afternoon. There were 110 criminal cases tried, and twenty-five persons were sent to jail, seven to the penitentiary at Columbus, O., and two to the reformatory at Washington. It is remarked by the court officers that the grand jury was the poorest ever seen here. It is said that one of its members had been indicted for moonshining. One juror admitted that it was the poorest jury he had ever seen, and that against some men ready to submit no true bill was found.

It is learned that Dr. Kirby H. Smith, about whom so great a scandal was raised at the penitentiary, has returned from New York to Goldsboro, and says he is going south, presumably to Florida, where he lived ten years.

The Baptist state convention raised \$5,000 for the completion of the Baptist state normal university here. This imposing building will certainly be completed next summer.

The shoe factory at the Farmers' State Alliance at Hillsboro regularly began work yesterday, after over two years idleness.

The state commissioner of agriculture says there are now 2,000,000 acres of waste land in the southeastern counties, which if in timber, would yield returns at the rate of about \$500,000 a year. The loss is due to lack of care in growing pine trees on these lands.

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